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EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

# ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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DECEMBER 2021 // NEWSLETTER



Ambassador Argüello accompanied by the Heads of the Economic and Political Section of the Embassy.

## MEETING WITH THE COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS AT THE ARGENTINE EMBASSY: ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Argentine Embassy and the Council of the Americas held a work session at the diplomatic mission to analyze, together with a group of large U.S. companies, the evolution of the Argentine economy and also present our country's investment opportunities.

On this occasion, Ambassador Argüello gave a presentation on the domestic economic recovery; he referred to diverse

bills that aim to generate exports and attract investments, such as hydrocarbons, lithium, and electromobility, among others, and also detailed specific commercial opportunities in sectors of interest for the companies.

This event, moderated by the vice president of the Council of the Americas, Eric Farnsworth, was the last of the "Ambassadors Breakfast Series", a program for

Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter but this time, after another challenging year, I want to take the opportunity to wish you and your family Happy Holidays and a healthy 2022. This edition includes an article on a work session organized by the Argentine Embassy and the Council of the Americas with a group of U.S. companies on the evolution of the Argentine economy and our country's investment opportunities.

We also include an article on the meeting held with Jessica Stern, Special Envoy appointed by President Joseph Biden to advance deliberations on the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) persons.

Finally, an article on a virtual seminar organized by the Argentine Embassy and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on the post-pandemic recovery and its effect on the elderly.

Jorge Argüello  
Ambassador to the United States



THE GDP GROWTH, WHICH WOULD EXCEED 9% IN 2021, THE CREATION OF 300 THOUSAND JOBS, AND THE INCREASE IN EXPORTS, WHICH THIS YEAR WOULD EXCEED US\$75 BILLION, WERE HIGHLIGHTED.

the exchange of ideas between senior executives of U.S. companies and the heads of diplomatic missions in Washington D.C. Firms from various areas participated: mining, telecommunications, pharmaceutical sector, automotive, finance, streaming, oil, gas, among others.

In his presentation, the ambassador highlighted the GDP growth, which would exceed 9% in 2021; the creation of 300.000 jobs, and a surge in exports that would exceed US\$ 75 billion this year. Likewise, Ambassador Arguello praised the advanced vaccination campaign, with 7 out of 10 Argentines over 11 years of age being fully vaccinated. He also reported that swift progress has been made in vaccinating children between 3 and 11 years old. In this regard, he highlighted that Argentina is immunizing its citizens with vaccines tested and available in the market, which reflects the country's pragmatic global insertion.

The Knowledge Based-Economy Law was also highlighted by the ambassador, who noted that this new legal framework was drafted after a process of dialogue with the private sector, entrepreneurs and engineers, and diverse experts. It aims to enhance the competitive capacity of the 11,000 companies that comprise this industry. The United States is the main market for this sector, which requires highly qualified personnel and is already one of the main exporting complexes from Argentina.

During the conversation, the companies expressed special interest in the lithium industry and its value chain; highlighting that Argentina is the main supplier of this mineral to the United States. The outstanding ties between the provincial, local, and national levels, as well as the activities, carried out by the embassy with the governors of Salta, Jujuy y Catamarca was also mentioned.

Reference was made to the national cybersecurity strategy and its importance in strengthening capacities in both the public and private spheres, as well as the work by companies regarding certifications and standards.

In closing, Ambassador Argüello invited the Council of the Americas and the companies present at the meeting, to continue deepening their interactions in 2022, as a way of developing a smooth articulation, with special emphasis on investment opportunities in Argentina. ■



## WORKING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BIDEN'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE RIGHTS OF LGBTIQ + PEOPLE, JESSICA STERN

On December 17, Ambassador Jorge Argüello received Jessica Stern, Special Envoy appointed by President Joseph Biden, to advance deliberations on the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) persons. During the meeting, both drew up an intense bilateral work agenda for next year, which includes the organization by the Argentine Embassy of the next meeting of the Global Equality Fund in April 2022.

The protection and promotion of the human rights of LGBTIQ+ people is part of a solid state policy in the Argentine Republic, consolidated over the past decades thanks to the tireless struggle of these group's activists and organizations, which led the Argentine Congress to approve two fundamental laws that became milestones in

terms of recognition of rights: the Equal Marriage Law of July 2010 and the Gender Identity Law of May 2012, which placed our country at the forefront of this process in the region.

More recently, the Argentine Congress enacted the public policy implemented by President Alberto Fernández through Decree 721/20 on the Transvestite-Trans Labor Quota in the public sector. At the same time, it allowed the new Argentine IDs (DNI) and passports to add a third option to the "gender" category, thereby including the right to gender identity of people who do not recognize themselves within the female/male binary system. These measures reveal a strong coincidence with the approach adopted by the Biden Administration, which, from its

Special Envoy Jessica Stern and Ambassador Jorge Argüello at the Embassy



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inception, established the promotion and protection of the human rights of LGBTIQ+ people as an important priority of its Administration.

During the meeting, the Ambassador and the Special Envoy reviewed the latest developments on this issue, both nationally and internationally, and pointed out the great potential presented by a common commitment to this agenda by the governments of the Argentine Republic and the United States. Both share spaces such as the United Nations LGBTI Core Group and the Equal Rights Coalition to deepen bilateral cooperation and to coordinate joint initiatives that advance the promotion of an expansion of the human rights of LGBTIQ+ people.

As to the next meeting of the Global Equality Fund, a fund managed by the State Department with the support of a coalition of governments, companies and like-minded organizations, this will offer a new opportunity for Argentina to ratify its commitment to building more democratic, egalitarian, diverse and inclusive societies, an objective for which achieving the full validity of LGBTIQ+ human rights is a pre-requisite. ■



DR. MÓNICA ROQUÉ

AMBASSADOR  
JORGE ARGUELLO

MR. EDWIN WALKER



DR. ENRIQUE VEGA GARCÍA



MS. ISABEL LOVRINCEVICH



DR. RANDALL RUTTA



DR. PETER RUNDLET



MINISTER LUZ MELON

Webinar panelists

## POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY AND ITS EFFECTS ON OLDER PERSONS

On December 15, the Argentine Embassy and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) organized a virtual seminar on post-pandemic recovery and its effect on the elderly. Based on this premise, an open discussion was held on the challenges and opportunities ahead, highlighting the response given to the Covid-19 pandemic. Alternatives were proposed to ensure an institutional framework that is better prepared for an aging population while setting aside stereotypes, and seeking ways that allow older adults to continue contributing to the culture, economy, and social development of their communities.

Ambassador Jorge Argüello's opening remarks introduced a panel of experts: Edwin Walker, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging, US Department of Health and Human Services; Mónica Roqué, General Secretary for Human

Rights, Community Gerontology, Gender, and Care Policies at PAMI; Enrique Vega García, Head of the Healthy Life Course Unit at PAHO; Randall Rutta, CEO of the National Health Council; Peter Rundlet, Vice P, International Affairs, AARP; and Isabel Lovrinkevich, Vice President, Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons

The panelists reflected on a specific aspect of the proposed topic, taking a comprehensive approach that allowed for heterogeneous but complementary perspectives by government actors, think tanks, multilateral organizations, and civil society organizations. They were joined by specialists focused on the possibilities provided by the pandemic to re-evaluate public policies and current institutional frameworks. Each of these viewpoints aimed to better address the phenomenon of an aging population.

## THE PRESENTATIONS WARNED ABOUT THE DISCRIMINATORY BIAS IN THE DIRECT ASSOCIATION USUALLY MADE BETWEEN THE ELDERLY AND ILLNESS OR FRAILITY.

The common denominator of the presentations focused on the realization of the significant increase in life expectancy in recent years, although acknowledging the existence of a gap between “life expectancy” and “healthy life expectancy”. In this regard, Ambassador Argüello, Dr. Vega García, and Mr. Rundlet agreed on the need to seek answers from law and health, but above all from politics, given that aging will be one of the major topics in the 21st century, especially in the Global South. In this regard, the Decade of Healthy Aging 2021-2030 represents a great opportunity to prioritize the elderly in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the other hand, the presentations warned about the discriminatory bias present in the direct association that is usually made between the elderly and illness or frailty, in addition to highlighting the role that older people exercise as part of the solution in various fields such as science, medicine or job creation. In fact, Ambassador Argüello contextualized this reality under the concept of the “silver economy”, while Rundlet mentioned the “multigenerational workforces”, referring to the ability to generate a strong impact on the countries’ GDP since they not only perform better but also generate higher productivity, notwithstanding that not all companies have yet adopted policies that favor their creation.

Another of the themes addressed throughout the day referred to the lessons learned from the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, an issue voiced by Deputy Assistant

Secretary Walker, who mentioned issues such as the use of reliable voices in the community to convey messages, the creation of smaller, safer and more familiar vaccination clinics, the use of data to reach people in hard-to-reach places, and the use of specific communication strategy for populations with limited use of English.

In this context, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging at the Department of Health explained the transition made in his country during the pandemic towards virtual programs, an issue also emphasized by Rutta, who also referred to the opportunities and risks posed by telemedicine. He also highlighted the relevance of maintaining a comprehensive system, as well as other flexibilities in care, that were resorted to in the current health situation, while ensuring the digital inclusion of older adults.

From another angle, Roqué and Lovrincevich pointed to the multiple discrimination suffered by older people, as well as the visibility and dissemination of negative stereotypes, further evidenced by the pandemic. Both appealed to a conception of human rights that includes older adults, highlighting the right to life and dignity raised in the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, which also defines old age as “the social construction of the last stage of the life cycle”, in which media will play a key role in modifying the image of old age in society.

Minister Luz Melon coordinated a Q&A session with the panelists, which included questions raised by the audience, before Ambassador Argüello closed the event, evoking the traditional Argentine position on aging. In particular, the historical axis that the recognition and promotion of the rights of the elderly have in Argentine foreign policy, manifested as early as 1948 during the Third General Assembly of the United Nations, and later ratified through the prominent role of our diplomacy in the initiative that led to the creation of the Working Group on Aging at the UN; the approval of the Inter-American Convention for on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons at the OAS,

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and recently in the leadership demonstrated to achieve the adoption of a resolution on this subject at the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Finally, the Argentine Ambassador ratified our country's willingness to be part of a process of dialogue and cooperation with other nations in the search for solutions for the elderly, a challenge in which there is still much to be done. ■